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Book of...

**CONSTITUTION
AND BY-LAWS**

of the SOCIETY OF
AMERICAN WARS
of the United States.*

**Vicerunt
of
Vivamus**

MINNEAPOLIS

1399

Book of Constitution and By-Laws
of the Society of American Wars ❁
❁ ❁ ❁ ❁ ❁ ❁ ❁ of the United States



Founded January 11th, 1897

Incorporated February 10th, 1897



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CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

TITLE.

This Society shall be known as the "Society of American Wars" of the United States.

ARTICLE II.

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

The Society of American Wars was instituted by Edward Junius Edwards, January 11th, 1897, for perpetuating among their descendants the memory of the men who were instrumental in establishing the Colonies of North America and were founders of this Nation; of the men who achieved American Independence; and of the men who in military and naval positions of trust assisted in the preservation of the Republic in the 1812, Mexican and Civil Wars; collecting for preservation documents relating to those periods; providing suitable commemorations of the prominent events connected with those periods; and inspiring in its companions the fraternal and patriotic spirit of their forefathers.

ARTICLE III.

ORGANIZATION.

Section 1.—This Society shall be composed of State Commanderies and a Commandery-in-Chief which shall embrace all the companions of the several State Commanderies.

Section 2.—There shall be but one Commandery in each State of not more than one hundred companions, which shall be designated as “Commandery of the State of ———,” excepting “Commandery of the District of Columbia,” which shall be designated as such.

The seniority of the State Commanderies shall be determined by the respective dates of their institution.

ARTICLE IV.

MEMBERSHIP.

Section 1.—Any man of full age, of good moral character and reputation shall be eligible to active companionship in the Society of American Wars, who served with honor as a commissioned officer in the Army, Navy or Marine Corps of the United States, in the Civil War between the 12th day of April, 1861, and the 9th day of April, 1865; or in the Spanish War between the 21st day of April and the 12th day of August, 1898; or who is the lineal descendant of an ancestor (1) who served as a Governor, Lieutenant or Deputy Governor, or member of the Council or Assembly, or as a Military or Naval Officer under authority of the Colonies which afterwards formed the United States, from the settlement of Jamestown May 13th, 1607, to the 19th day of April, 1783, and was instrumental in establishing the Colonies of North America or American Independence. (After December 31, 1899, strike out “or Assembly.”) (2) Who served with honor as a Commissioned Officer in the Army, Navy or Marine Corps of the United States in—

“The War of 1812, between the 18th day of June, 1812, and the 18th day of February, 1815,”

“The Mexican War, between the 9th day of May, 1846, and the 4th day of July, 1848,”

“The Civil War, between the 12th day of April, 1861, and the 9th day of April, 1865,”

“The Spanish War, between the 21st day of April and the 12th day of August, 1898.”

Or (3) of a Companion of the Society of American Wars.

Section 2.—Every application for companionship shall be made to and after nomination by the Commandery of the State in which the applicant resides, if a Commandery exists therein, and if there be none then to such Commandery as the applicant may be nominated by. All names presented to the Society must be referred to the Committee on Companionship before nomination.

Section 3.—Formal application for Companionship accompanied by proof of eligibility must be made to a State Commandery in duplicate, upon blank forms prescribed by the Commandery-in-Chief, and shall in each case set forth the name, occupation and residence of the applicant, his line of descent, and the name, residence and personal service or services of his ancestor from whom he derives eligibility, under his affirmation upon honor that the statements are true to the best of applicant's knowledge and belief. Such application and proof shall be referred to the Committee on Companionship, who shall carefully investigate same and report at the next meeting of the Board of Officers of the Commandery their recommendation thereon; and the name, residence and occupation of every applicant shall be published in a circular. An application may be withdrawn before the ballot if any objections have been made thereto. The applicant shall be elected by a unanimous vote at a stated meeting of the Board of Officers of the Commandery. Payment of the initiation fee and dues and subscription to the Declaration of the Society shall be a pre-requisite of companionship.

Upon the approval of an application by the State Commandery one copy shall be transmitted to the Registrar-General, who shall examine further the eligibility of the applicant, and unless satisfied that the Companion is eligible, he shall return the application, and thereupon the State Commandery shall, upon failure to satisfy the Registrar-General of the eligibility of such applicant, drop his name from companionship.

Section 4.—Honorary Companions: Companions who have been specially distinguished for services to the National Government;

but the number shall be limited to the number of States represented in the General Society's companionship. Honorary Companions shall be elected by the Commandery-in Chief.

Section 5.—Members of the Society shall be entitled Companions.

Section 6.—All invitations to Companionship (prior to the annual meeting in 1900) to gentlemen residing in a State where a Commandery has not been instituted, shall be given by the Minnesota Commandery.

ARTICLE V.

OFFICERS.

Section 1.—The officers of the several State Commanderies shall consist of a Commander, two Vice-Commanders, Recorder, Treasurer, Registrar, Genealogist, Historian, Chancellor, Chaplain, Surgeon, Musical Director, and a Council consisting of not more than twelve Companions, which officers with the Ex-Commanders shall constitute the Board of Officers of the Commandery. They shall be elected annually by ballot by a majority of the votes cast.

Should no candidate receive a majority of the votes cast at the first ballot, then the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped, and so on at each successive ballot. The Companions so elected shall be invested personally or by written acceptance, and enter upon the office at once, and hold the same until their successors shall have been elected and invested.

Section 2.—The officers of the Commandery-in-Chief shall be a Commander General, seven Vice-Commander-Generals, Recorder-General, Treasurer-General, Registrar-General, Genealogist-General, Historian-General, Chancellor-General, Chaplain-General, Surgeon-General and Council-in-Chief, consisting of nine Companions, which officers shall constitute the Board of Officers of the Commandery-in-Chief. They shall be elected annually until 1900, and thereafter biennially in the manner prescribed for the election of officers of the

State Commanderies, and shall be invested personally or by written acceptance and enter upon their office at once, and hold the same until their successors shall have been elected and invested.

(Provided that until the annual meeting in 1900 an Assistant Recorder-General may be appointed by the Commander-General, and the Recorder-General and Assistant Recorder-General shall respectively have such duties and powers corresponding to that of the Recorder, as may be designated to each of said officers by the Commander-General).

ARTICLE VI.

DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS.

Section 1.—It shall be the duty of the Commander to preside at all meetings of the Commandery or Board of Officers, enforce a strict observance of the Constitution and By-Laws, and perform such other duties as custom and parliamentary usage may require.

Section 2.—The Vice-Commanders shall, when called upon, assist the Commander, and in his absence perform his duties, and shall succeed, in order, to his office in the event of his death, resignation or removal.

Section 3.—It shall be the duty of the Recorder to record the proceedings of the Commandery and of the Board of Officers, and collect all moneys due the Commandery.

Section 4.—It shall be the duty of the Registrar to keep a register of the Companions of the Commandery, embracing the material facts relating to their membership. In the absence or disability of the Recorder, he shall act in his stead.

Section 5.—It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive from the Recorder all moneys belonging to the Commandery, and receipt therefor. He shall give such security as the Commandery may direct.

Section 6.—The Genealogist shall investigate all applications for Companionship. His approval on all applications shall be required before they are filed with the Registrar. An appeal from his decision may be taken to the Committee on Companionship, and, at their discretion to the Commandery.

Section 7.—The Chancellor shall have the care and custody of the insignia, ribbon and rosettes, and shall issue, on proper requisitions, the diploma and insignia. In the absence or disability of the Treasurer, he shall act in his stead.

Section 8.—It shall be the duty of the Chaplain to open the several meetings of the Commandery with prayer, and perform such other duties as general custom may require of him.

Section 9.—The Council shall constitute a standing committee on accounts, and shall audit and adjust the Commandery's books semi-annually, or oftener if required to do so, rendering reports thereof to the Commandery.

Section 10.—The Board of Officers shall have general supervision and control over all property belonging to the Commandery. It shall have the power to fill vacancies in any of the offices of the Commandery, until the time of the next election, except in that of Commander, which shall be filled as prescribed in Section 2 of this Article, and may transact any other business pertaining to the Commandery except that of the annual election.

Section 11.—Other duties may be prescribed for the officers by the By-Laws or by the Commandery upon recommendation of the Board of Officers.

ARTICLE VII.

Any officer who shall neglect or improperly perform the duties incumbent upon him, may be removed at any stated meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Commandery present.

ARTICLE VIII.

MEETINGS.

Section 1.—The stated meetings of the several State Commanderies shall be held at such times as they shall determine by a two-thirds vote; *Provided, however,* That every Commandery shall hold an annual meeting in the month of April for the election of officers.

Section 2.—Special meetings shall be convened at the pleasure of the Commander, or upon the written request of ten Companions of the Commandery upon seven days' notice.

Section 3.—Seven Companions of the Commandery shall constitute a quorum at any meeting for the transaction of business.

Section 4.—None but Companions of the Society shall be present at its business meetings.

ARTICLE IX.

ARREARS.

Section 1.—No Companion in arrears shall be entitled to vote at the annual election of officers, or be eligible to any office in the Society.

Section 2.—Any Companion who may be in arrears for three months or more, shall be notified thereof; and if such arrears shall not be paid within one month after such notice, the Commandery may, by a majority vote of the members present, suspend the Companion until such arrears shall be paid or remitted.

Section 3.—Any Companion who shall neglect or refuse to pay such arrears may be dropped from the roll by vote of two-thirds of the Companions present at any stated meeting, unless it shall appear that the delinquency has occurred unavoidably, in which case the Commandery may remit the whole or any portion of such arrears by a two-thirds vote. A Companion so dropped, may,

upon payment of such arrears, be re-instated by vote of a majority of the members of the Commandery present at any stated meeting ; *Provided*, That notice of such intended action shall have been published by circular.

ARTICLE X.

COMMANDERY-IN-CHIEF.

Section 1.—The Commandery-in-Chief shall consist of its Board of Officers and of the Commanders, Ex-Commanders, Vice-Commanders, Ex-Vice-Commanders, Recorders and Ex-Recorders of the several Commanderies.

Section 2.—The duties and powers of the officers of the Commandery-in-Chief shall correspond with those prescribed in this Constitution and By-Laws for officers of State Commanderies.

Section 3.—The chief executive, legislative and supreme judicial power shall be vested in the Commandery-in-Chief.

Section 4.—The Commandery-in-Chief shall, in the name and by the authority of the Society, issue all diplomas of membership.

Section 5.—The Chancellor-General shall have the custody of the diploma plate, dies, insignia, ribbon and rosettes, and, upon requisition, shall deliver to the Chancellors of State Commanderies the diplomas, insignia and rosettes required for their respective Companions.

Section 6.—Should any State Commandery cease to hold regular meetings for one year, its charter may be revoked by the Commandery-in-Chief, and in the event of such revocation the Companions of such Commandery in good standing shall be transferred to such other Commanderies as they may elect.

Section 7.—The headquarters of the Commandery-in-Chief shall be in the City of Minneapolis, Minn., until April, 1900 ; after that at Washington, D. C.

Section 8.—Special meetings of the Commandery-in-Chief shall be convened at the pleasure of the Commander-General, or upon the written request of twenty members, upon ten days' notice. Five members shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present at any meeting a quorum can be obtained by circular letter, under Section 10.

Section 9.—The expenses of the Commandery-in-Chief shall be provided for by the dues of Companions residing in a State where a Commandery has not been instituted, the admission fees of all Companions, and a pro rata assessment upon each State Commandery according to its respective number of Companions.

Section 10.—Any business pertaining to the Commandery-in-Chief may be presented to its members (at any time prior to the annual meeting in 1900) by a circular letter sent to each member thereof, and their recorded votes thereon shall have the same effect and force as though given in a regular meeting of the Commandery-in-Chief.

ARTICLE XI.

STATE COMMANDERIES.

Section 1.—Authority to organize a State Commandery may be granted by the Commandery-in-Chief, upon the vote of two-thirds of its members present at any meeting, on written application by at least ten Companions, whereupon a Charter shall be issued.

Section 2.—The form of Charter shall be as follows :

Section 3.—Upon issuing a Charter, the Commander-General shall designate the time and place for the organization of the Commandery. The officers shall then be chosen, and shall enter upon their duties at once, and hold office until their successors, elected at the annual meeting next following, shall have been invested.

Section 4.—Each Commandery shall have power to adopt rules and regulations for its own government, which shall not conflict with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Society.

Section 5.—Each Commandery on the first day of May in every year, shall make a full report of its condition, with a general history of its proceedings, to the Commandery-in-Chief.

ARTICLE XII.

Motto of the Society : *Vicerunt vt Vivamus.*

Colors of the Society : *Sanguine and Blue.*

Coat of Arms of the Society.

Seal of the Society.

Insignia of the Society.

Diploma of the Society.

COMMITTEE ON DESIGNS.

A standing committee shall be appointed consisting of a Chairman, Secretary, and three Companions from different States, who shall prepare designs for the Coat of Arms, Seal, Charter, Diploma and Insignia, and report their recommendations to the Commandery-in-Chief from time to time.

ARTICLE XIII.

UNIFORM OF THE SOCIETY.

Section 1.—On occasion of ceremony, Companions may wear the uniform of their respective arm and grade in the service.

The Insignia shall be worn conspicuously on the left breast, except that officers of the Society shall wear the Badge suspended by the Ribbon around the neck.

Section 2.—Companions when not on duty may wear the Rosette of the prescribed colors in the upper button-hole of the left lapel of the coat. The Rosette shall not be worn at the same time as the Insignia, and the Insignia shall be worn at all meetings of the Society. (The Ribbon of the Society suspended from the Insignia bar may be worn in place of the Rosette).

ARTICLE XIV.

AMENDMENTS.

No alteration, addition or amendment shall be made to this Constitution unless it shall have been proposed by a State Commandery, communicated to all other Commanderies, and ratified by the vote of three-fourths of the Commanderies at the next succeeding meeting of the Commandery-in-Chief.



BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE I.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The order of business at stated meetings may be as follows :

1. The Commandery shall be called to order by the presiding officer.
2. The Chaplain shall pronounce the opening prayer.
3. The Recorder may call the roll of members.
4. The minutes of the last stated and all subsequent meetings shall be read and acted upon.
5. Companions-elect shall be installed.
6. The stated business of the meeting, if any, shall be considered.
7. Unfinished business shall be taken up.
8. Reports of officers and committees shall be heard.
9. Written communications shall be presented.
10. New business may be introduced.
11. Adjournment.

ARTICLE II.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Section 1.—The general parliamentary law shall govern the meetings of the Commanderies.

Section 2.—All official orders, communications, records and proceedings of whatever character, shall conform as nearly as possible to the general regulations, usages and customs of the military service of the United States.

ARTICLE III.

INVESTITURE OF OFFICERS.

A Companion elected to any office in the Society, before being invested with the authority of the same, shall make a formal declaration upon honor that he will well and faithfully perform the duties of the office upon which he is about to enter, and comply with all the established laws and usages of the Society.

ARTICLE IV.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS.

Section 1.—In addition to those prescribed by the Constitution, the following duties shall be performed by the several officers of the Commandery: It shall be the duty of the Commander to appoint all officers and committees not otherwise provided for, of which he shall ex-officio be a member; and sign all orders drawn upon the Treasurer, by order of the Board of Officers or the Commandery, for sums necessary to defray expenses, and for other appropriations.

Section 2.—It shall be the duty of the Recorder to keep in books provided for that purpose—

1st. The Constitution and By-Laws, rules and regulations of the Society.

2nd. A letter-book of copies of all official letters.

3rd. A ledger, to contain the accounts of the Commandery with its members.

4th. A receipt-book, in which to take the Treasurer's receipts.

5th. It shall be his duty to keep these books in readiness for inspection by the Council, keep all accounts between the Commandery and its members, attest all orders drawn upon the Treasurer, and give due notice of all meetings. On the 1st day of April in each year he shall forward to every Companion a statement of his account. He shall notify the Commandery-in-Chief and the State Commanderies, from time to time as they may occur, of applications, the withdrawal of applications, admissions, rejections, suspensions, expulsions, resignations, restorations and deaths. He shall have the care and custody of the Seal of the Society. He shall, at the last stated meeting in his term of office, make a full report of all moneys received during his term, and of all arrearages of Companions, and transfer to his successor in office, within two weeks after the expiration of his term, all books, papers or other property in his possession belonging to his office.

Section 3.—The Treasurer shall pay all orders signed by the Commander and attested by the Recorder, and none others, and retain these orders as his vouchers. He shall keep accounts of his receipts and expenditures, making quarterly statements thereof. He shall pay over and deliver to his successor in office all moneys, vouchers, books and papers belonging to the Commandery.

Section 4.—The Chancellor shall keep in a book full and complete records of the issue of Diplomas, Insignia, Ribbon and Rosettes. In no case shall he issue a duplicate Diploma or Insignia except by a vote of the Commandery of which he is Chancellor, based upon the statement, upon honor, by the applicant that the original has been either lost or destroyed; *provided*, that a Companion obtaining such duplicate shall pay the actual cost thereof.

ARTICLE V.

INSTALLATION OF COMPANIONS.

A Companion-elect upon being installed shall, orally if present, and in writing if absent, make declaration upon honor that he will maintain the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Society, and conform to its By-Laws and rules, and use his best endeavors to promote its objects and advance its interests.

ARTICLE VI.

FUNDS.

Section 1.—The fiscal year of the Society shall begin on the thirtieth day of April.

Section 2.—The funds for the expenses of the Society shall be raised by admission fees and annual dues from each Companion, which shall be paid in advance.

The admission fee of applicants for companionship shall be twenty-five dollars.

The annual dues of Companions residing in a State where a Commandery has been instituted shall be five dollars (except that dues of commissioned officers of the United States Army and Navy shall be two dollars).

The annual dues of Companions residing in a State where a Commandery has not been instituted shall be two dollars.

Commissioned officers of the United States Army and Navy shall be exempt from the admission fee.

The admission fees received from all Companions and the dues received from Companions residing in a State where a Commandery has not been instituted shall be paid to the Commandery-in-Chief.

Section 3.—Any Companion who shall pay, at one time, one hundred and fifty dollars in addition to his admission fee, shall be exempt from the payment of all further dues, and all sums so paid shall be transferred immediately to the Treasurer for investment in such securities as shall be approved by the Board of Officers.

Section 4.—Should a Companion whose dues have been commuted by payment as hereinbefore provided, be transferred to another Commandery, there shall be paid to such Commandery an amount bearing the same proportion to the present value of a life annuity (Carlisle table, six per cent) at his present age that the commutation fee originally paid by him bore to that value at his age at that time.

ARTICLE VII.

AMENDMENTS.

No alteration, addition or amendment shall be made to the By-Laws unless agreed to in the Commandery-in-Chief by three-fourths of the Commanderies.

COMMANDERY-IN-CHIEF, SOCIETY OF AMERICAN WARS.

The above is a correct copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Society of American Wars, as enacted and amended to May 23, 1899.

May 30th, 1899.

ATTEST:

EDWARD JUNIUS EDWARDS,
COMMANDER-GENERAL.

KENDRIC CHARLES BABCOCK,
Recorder-General.

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